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AFFIRMATION:

APR 13 1984

UNITED METHODISTS FOR LESBIAN AND GAY CONCERNS

Post Office Box 1021 Evanston, Illinois 60204

ARCHIVES

APRIL 1984

BY:

A PRESENCE & COVENANT

Covenant Groups will be a primary vehicle through which we nurture our people. We expect each Affirmation person who is at the General Conference for three days or more to be a member of a covenant group. These small groups of six-eight persons serve as a source of support and solidarity for their members. Feelings of being isolated or alienated from the church, the group, or the world in general can be alleviated through the love and trust which develops when a covenant group works, plays, and relates together. The major purpose of a covenant group is to give and feed mutual support.

A training event for covenant group members will precede the General Conference on April 30. This event will be a crucial orientation for our participation in the General Conference. The event will provide group building for each covenant group and

To be a presence at General Conference says:

- We care about the church.
- We acknowledge the capacity/power (as individuals; Affirmation; United Methodist Church) for being justice seekers/doers.
- We call the church to accountability.

Affirmation chooses a non-violent presence to keep ourselves accountable to justice as a way of living/acting/being. We use Covenant Groups to support ourselves and to keep ourselves accountable to each other.

will give participants a needed time of centering prior to the opening of General Conference.

As a part of the design of our presence and for the purpose of taking care of ourselves, each person will be expected to participate in four hours of community service in Baltimore. This participation in the Baltimore community will offer a creative outlet, will help participants keep their sense of perspective, and will reflect Affirmation's commitment to justice. This piece of our presence will be coordinated by a local Baltimore person. Each person will be able to choose a task he/she will enjoy and will have an opportunity to get away from the tensions of General Conference.

The design of the Covenant Group is, then, reflective of one of Affirmation's primary commitments: to take care of ourselves at General Conference.

MAY 3 -- COMMUNION WITH OUR SAINTS

On May 3, during General Conference, Affirmation is hosting a dinner honoring those who have been publicly supportive of lesbians and gay men within the United Methodist Church. This event is meant to be an up-beat occasion, as counterpoint to whatever is happening at General Conference, and is titled "Communion With Our Saints: A Celebration of Lesbian and Gay Survival and Hope".

The dinner will occur at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday May 3, St. John's United Methodist Church in Baltimore. Tickets will be \$10.00 (\$5.00 for students and Senior Citizens).

The "honorees" for the evening will include Bishop Melvin and Lucile Wheatley, Rev. Roy Sano and Rev. Kathy Thomas-Sano,

Rev. Michael Cowan, Joan Clark, and others yet to be confirmed. All these persons stand, too, as representatives of many others who will remain faceless and nameless, and who have been very helpful either to individuals or to our work in general over the past few years.

The short program following the dinner will include a sequence of readings, music, reflections and presentations by members of Affirmation, focusing on the themes of survival and hope, as each "honoree" is recognized. An historical account of pivotal events in the life of Affirmation and the United Methodist Church may also be included.

FRIENDS OF WHEATLEY

A letter spelling out the "Friends of Bishop Wheatley" campaign and signed by various church leaders was recently mailed to United Methodists across the country. The letter says, "We are writing to you because we believe you will want to join us in making a statement in support of a loving and courageous leader of the United Methodist Church, Bishop Melvin E. Wheatley.....Within the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference, over which Bishop Wheatley presides, there are a number of individuals and congregations who have chosen to withhold all or a portion of their conference apportionments in protest over Bishop Wheatley's actions and statements. The Rocky Mountain Conference projects a loss of income from these individuals and churches amounting to between \$76,000 and \$125,000. This would amount to actual income of from 24% to 26% below their spending budget. While the implications for that conference are profound, they reach beyond the possibility of curtailed programs of ministry and outreach there."

The writers of the letter are seeking support by suggesting one or more of the following actions:

1) Financial contributions to the Rocky Mt. Conference to offset the deficit. Identified or anonymous contributions "should be sent no later than June 10, 1984, in care of J. Thomas Bennanzar, United Methodist Headquarters, 2200 S. University Boulevard, Denver, CO 80210. Checks should be marked 'Friends of Bishop Wheatley,' and made payable to 'Rocky Mountain Annual Conference.'"

2) Send a letter of support and appreciation to the above address. These letters will be bound into a volume to be presented to Bishop Wheatley at the time the financial contributions are given to the Conference.

3) Encourage others to join this campaign.

The writers close with, "We hope that you will be willing to join us in this project as we seek not only to demonstrate our support for a very special person, but also to show that there are large numbers of people who do believe in the kind of inclusive ministry for which Bishop Wheatley has taken a stand."

AFFIRMATION Headquarters at General Conference - THE CONGRESS HOTEL
ph. 301-539-0227 to leave a message or ask for Affirmation's direct number

PLATFORM STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN MAILED!!!

Affirmation's Platform Statement, a document suggesting theological pre-suppositions and legislative proposals for the General Conference, has been mailed to all General Conference delegates. You may find this document helpful as a basis for communicating Affirmation's agenda for the General Conference with others. To receive a copy, write to Morris Floyd (address elsewhere in this newsletter). A contribution of \$3.00 will help defray production and mailing costs.

TRAVEL POOL

As you know, a travel pool has been in operation for the last two National Affirmation Meetings. A travel pool will also be used at the upcoming Baltimore meeting in order to assist persons who would be unable (otherwise) to attend. A full share of the travel pool for each of the previous meetings has been approximately \$100-\$150.

The travel pool works like this:

1. Each person who attends submits the total cost of her/his travel expenses. (If you fly, you submit the plane ticket price, if you drive you divide the mileage amount by the number of people in the car.)
2. At the meeting, the total travel amount is divided by the number of people at the meeting.
3. Each person receives a refund for or pays the difference in that amount.

Please note:

*Some persons do not need their travel subsidized. These persons put their amount back in the travel pool. This will allow for participation of other folks.

*We realize that even after the travel costs are divided some persons may feel that the cost is prohibitive. (For instance, for persons whose travel would be less -- persons attending the meeting from Baltimore). We do not want the travel pool to be a barrier to attendance. We will try as diligently as possible to work it out. On the registration blank for the meeting, please indicate how much you could spend on the travel pool.

It is our hope that the travel pool will open up participation for people who would not otherwise be able to attend.

AFFIRMATION MEETING DATES

April 27-29, 1984	Baltimore, MD
September 14-16, 1984	Denver, CO
April 12-14, 1985	TBA
September 20-22, 1985	TBA
April 4-5, 1986	TBA

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS IN BALTIMORE

April 27-29

Affirmation's spring meeting will lay the foundation for Affirmation's life in the next years and will make final preparations for Affirmation's presence at General Conference.

Friday--April 27

all day - Coordinating Committee meets
evening - Gathering
General Conference overview and preparation

Saturday--April 28

morning - Projection/Reflection: The next two years
afternoon - Election of Coordinating Committee
Task Group formation
evening - Seder Meal and Worship Service

Sunday--April 29

morning - Business meeting
Worship with Saint John's; Bishop Melvin Wheatley preaching.
noon - Closing lunch
afternoon - Issue group formation (Affirmation members staying for General Conference will have opportunity to form issue groups congruent with their justice concerns. e.g. health, racial justice, economic justice, disarmament, etc.)

Monday, April 30

A "day in the country" as Affirmation persons who will be at General Conference gather for reflection, nurture in covenant groups, and play in the outdoors.

Tuesday, May 1

General Conference begins. Affirmation circulates first of daily newsletters and opens hospitality suite.

Thursday, May 3

Dinner honoring those who have been publicly supportive of lesbians and gay men within the U.M.C. (See article this newsletter.)

Sunday, May 6

Mid-Atlantic Affirmation (Washington, D.C.) hosts party for those present at General Conference.

Monday, May 7

Celebration of worship for General Conference participants led by Affirmation.

Friday, May 11

Closing of General Conference.

Registration Form - Baltimore meeting, April 27-29, 1984


Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____
Registration fee enclosed:
_____ \$20 or more if salary above \$20,000
_____ \$20 if salary \$10,000-\$20,000
_____ \$5 or more if salary below \$10,000

Travel Plans: _____
(flight information, car, etc.)

Travel Pool information:

Here is what it will cost me to get there \$ _____
Here is what I can afford to expend in order to participate \$ _____

RETURN THIS FORM TO: Affirmation, c/o Mark Bowman,
Washington, D.C. 

COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Mary Gaddis, [REDACTED] Holy City, CA
[REDACTED]
Morris Floyd, [REDACTED]
Minneapolis, MN
[REDACTED]
Ava Scott, [REDACTED] Philadelphia
PA
Michael Collins, [REDACTED]
New York, NY
John Hannay, [REDACTED]
Washington, D.C.
Lyle Loder, [REDACTED] Los Angeles,
CA
Two Lesbian Members whose names cannot be
used.

HELP!!!

HELP!!!

HOTEL DEPOSITS ARE NEEDED NOW!

You who are coming to General
Conference...a hotel deposit is needed from
you immediately if we are to retain our
block reservations of rooms! Send your
deposit to Affirmation, c/o Mark Bowman,
[REDACTED] Washington, D.C. [REDACTED]

Daily room rates:

\$24 - private room
\$12 - sharing room with one other person
\$8 - sharing room with two others

STREET THEATER AT GENERAL CONFERENCE

If you are coming to General Conference,
bring any of the following:

Coat	Crayons
Tie	Pens
Panty hose	Musical instruments
Make-up	

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UNABLE TO COME TO GENERAL CONFERENCE???

Here are some things you can do for General
Conference:

--Contributions for subsidizing those able
to be present (Primary Concern: We are
effective to the extent that we get people
there.)

Cost of room 14 nights. \$.168.00

Cost of food. . . . \$.6-\$10 per day

Cost of transportaion . . average of \$100

--Join a Covenant Group

Be "available" through prayer and energy
support. Offer availability to receive
phone calls when those at General
Conference need someone with whom to
talk.

Registration Form - General Conference Participation

May 1-10, 1984

I am planning to be in Baltimore from _____ to _____

Please reserve housing for me at the Congress Hotel. Enclosed is a
deposit of \$ _____

At General Conference I am interested in working with: ☐ Newsletter
☐ Dinner
☐ Worship
☐ Hospitality
☐ Street theater

Enclosed is a special contribution of \$ _____ to help defray Affirmation's
General Conference Expenses